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DEPT FOR AF/E, AF/RSA, AND A/S FRAZER

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [SO](#) [ET](#) [KE](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - CONVERSATIONS WITH TFG PRESIDENT YUSUF  
AND PM GEDI

Classified By: Ambassador Ranneberger for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Since the start of the Ethiopian intervention in Somalia, the Ambassador has been in close contact with TFG Prime Minister Gedi by phone, first from Baidoa and, during the past three days, from Mogadishu, and with President Yusuf. Yusuf from the outset has indicated that he understands the need to bring about a national government structure that is as inclusive and broad-based as possible. These statements initially contrasted sharply with triumphalist public declarations made by Gedi.

¶2. (C) Yusuf, with his military background, has also been more realistic about the challenges the TFG faces in ensuring order in Mogadishu and other areas, even with the Ethiopian presence. He claims that Islamic Courts elements have been instrumental in organizing small demonstrations in Mogadishu. He indicated he appreciates the need to counter the warlords, efforts to re-establish their traditional areas of control, but said that this will be difficult to achieve. On the 31st, Gedi said that key warlords will be called to Baidoa to discuss their role (several are members of the TFG Parliament).

¶3. (C) Our information indicates that warlords are making a determined effort to reestablish control over their former areas. Abdi Qeybdiid, with whom the U.S. fought in 1991, has reportedly shown up in Mogadishu and may have been given back control over his traditional area north of Mogadishu. Kanyare, who is an MP, has also reportedly been seen in Mogadishu and has reportedly been given control over his traditional area north of Balaad Road in Mogadishu. According to another report, the cousin of warlord Bashir Reggae, who had fled to Uganda, took possession of 172 technicals. Mohamed Dhere has reportedly been reinstalled in Johar. Huralle, who is the TFG Minister of Defense, will likely retake possession of Kismayo. Hussein Aideed, as Interior Minister, will play a key role in the setting up of local administration throughout the country.

¶4. (C) On another major security issue, Gedi told the Ambassador January 1, that a program for voluntary turning in of weapons in Mogadishu will begin on January 2 and run through the 6th. The results of that program will be assessed and a determination made as how to proceed to collect remaining weapons.

¶5. (C) During a December 29 meeting with Yusuf, the Ambassador emphasized concern about triumphalist statements being made by Gedi. Yusuf said that he shared the concerns and would meet with Gedi. Yusuf said that he had already made statements welcoming dialogue with all Somalis who renounce terrorism and violence, and would do so again. On

the 30th he met with Gedi outside of Mogadishu and then, together with Gedi, met with 200 representatives of civil society, the business community, and clan elders, among others. On the 30th Gedi made a positive public statement regarding TFG commitment to broad-based dialogue, and he has since reiterated that positive message. He and Yusuf have also indicated that the TFG will not engage in revenge, and Gedi has explicitly stated that there will be an amnesty<sup>8</sup> for all Islamic Courts members who renounce violence.

¶6. (C) This message notwithstanding, a variety of reports indicate that Mogadishu is extremely tense and that weapons collections efforts could spark serious problems. (Unrelated to weapons collection, there was an unconfirmed report January 1 that an explosion took place outside of a Mogadishu hotel.) Gedi told the Ambassador January 1 that the TFG is taking steps to establish order, and that the setting up of local administration would follow once order has been established. He said the TFG is deploying 350 police that were trained in Baidoa, and some judges. He said that the port and airport could be reopened within two days, once proper administration has been put in place.

¶7. (C) Both Yusuf and Gedi have consistently emphasized their interest in working very closely with the U.S. We have been giving them a clear message on the need to build a broad-based national government based on the TFG Charter and TFIs, and have indicated that they can count on U.S. support in that effort. Both have said that they realize achieving this is the only way to build security.

RANNEBERGER